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Food Safety Tips for **Bagged & Boxed** Lunches



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Food SAFETY

Canada

You need to be careful when you make and store lunches for school or work. Follow these tips to keep your food safe.

Keep it clean

- Wash your hands well with soap and hot water for 20 seconds before you begin. Also wash your hands when you switch from one food to another and when you are finished making the lunch.
- Clean and sanitize all cooking equipment, utensils and work surfaces with a mild bleach solution (use 5 ml/1 tsp. bleach in 750 ml/3 cups water). Do this before you start and after you have finished preparing food. Rinse with clean water. Let air dry if possible, or use clean kitchen towels or paper towels.
- If using a reusable lunch box or lunch bag, clean and sanitize that as well.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables well before preparing or eating them.



Keep cold food cold

- Don't use meat, chicken, seafood, eggs, mayonnaise and dairy products in your lunch if you can't keep your lunch cold, e.g. in a refrigerator or with freezer packs.
- Use an insulated lunch box with freezer packs or frozen juice boxes to keep cold lunches cold. The food should stay at or below 4°C (40°F). Paper and plastic bags do not work as well as insulated lunch boxes. If you do use paper or plastic bags, be sure to use freezer packs or

Keep *cold food cold!*

frozen juice boxes in between food items to help keep them cold.

- Keep lunch containers out of direct sunlight and away from radiators and other heat sources.
- After lunch, don't store any fresh food leftovers (e.g. half an egg salad sandwich) in your lunch bag or box unless you can put it in a refrigerator. If you don't have a refrigerator, throw out all fresh food leftovers after lunch. Freezer packs work for a few hours but they can't keep food cold for the whole day.
- If possible, refrigerate or freeze sandwiches before packing them for lunch.



Keep hot food hot

- Hot foods like soup, chili and stew must stay hot to be safe. Keep them at or above 60°C (140°F).
- Use an insulated container to store hot foods. Keep the container closed until lunchtime.
- Before you put hot food in an insulated container, preheat the container by filling it with boiling water and letting it stand for a couple of minutes. Then pour the water out and put the hot food into the container right away.

Safeguarding Canada's Food Supply

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is the Government of Canada's regulator for food safety, animal health and plant protection.

Food safety and consumer protection are essential to the health of Canadians. At the CFIA, the safety of Canada's food supply is central to everything we do.

For more information on food safety, visit the Canadian Food Inspection Agency website at

www.inspection.gc.ca

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